

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

IAWH

ADVANCING HER HEALTH

THE INSTITUTE FOR
THE ADVANCEMENT
OF WOMEN'S
HEALTH

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Dear Friend –

It is our pleasure to present this 2020 annual report for the Institute for the Advancement of Women's Health.

Please review the following pages of this report for an overview of 2020 programs, activities, and fundraising. We thank you and welcome you to join us on this journey as we fulfill our mission and enact our vision of the future of women's health.

Janine E. Payne

Cheryl J. Thompson

LEADERSHIP

IAWH is a 501 c 3 organization, started up in November of 2018. Janine Payne, MPH and Cheryl Thompson, M.S.P.H. are Co-Executive Directors. Between them is more than 30 years of experience in public health working in areas to include HIV/AIDS, Women's Health, Comparative Effectiveness Research, Cardiovascular Health, Opioid Use Disorder, Smoking Cessation, and much more. To learn more visit the IAWH site [HERE](#).



Janine E. Payne, MPH
Co-Executive Director



Cheryl J. Thompson, M.S.P.H.
Co-Executive Director

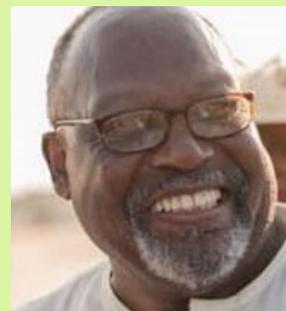
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Ethel Randall



Priscilla Novak



Thomas Porter

ABOUT IAWH



MISSION

The Institute for the Advancement of Women's Health (IAWH) is a non-profit organization based in Northern Virginia.

Our mission is to conduct and apply community-based, public health research that leads to women becoming more knowledgeable and better-informed participants in their health care and well-being. We provide a platform for networking and support for women throughout their health journey, across the lifespan.

VISION

Our vision is to serve as an educational resource for the culturally specific and gender-sensitive translation and application of evidence-based research and information on women's health.

GOALS

- Promote an informed and educated public on women's health
- Contribute to the advancement of research on and knowledge of women's health
- Provide platforms for women to learn, connect, network, and sustain engagement around women's health, health care, and well-being
- Serve as a consortium hub for similarly focused organizations throughout the region

“

**A WOMAN'S
HEALTH AND
WELLNESS IS
OUR PASSION**

”

2020 OVERVIEW

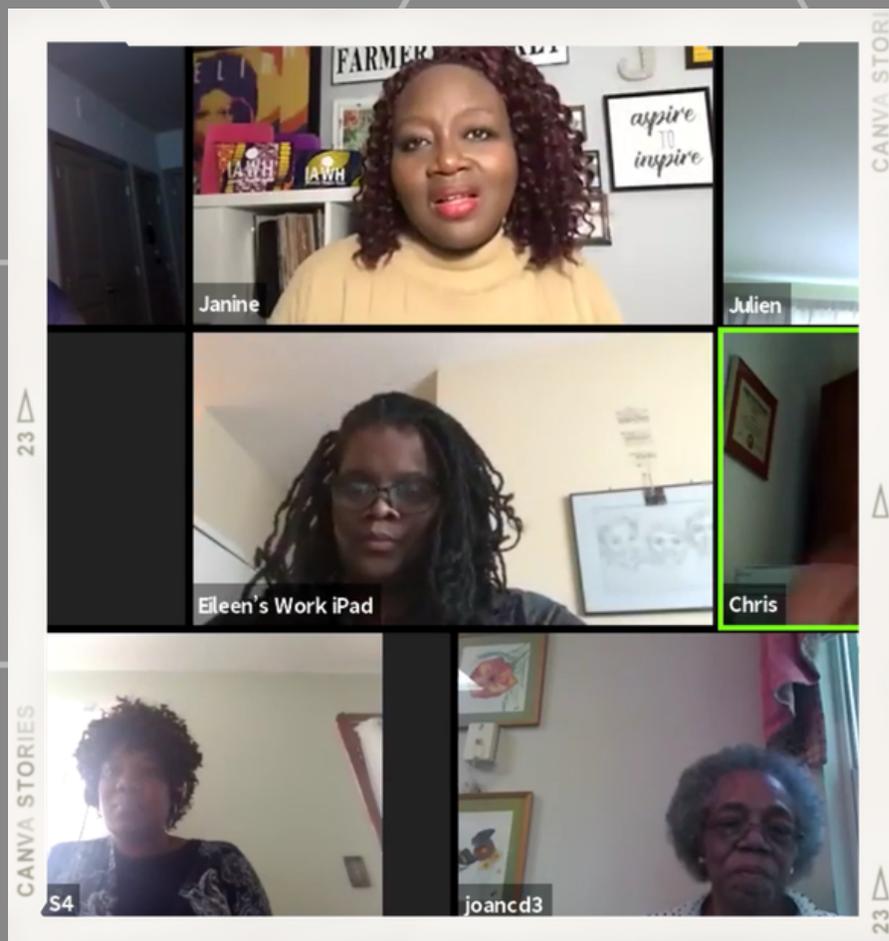
As you may have experienced, 2020 was a unique year. It was also a building year for IAWH, a time to establish this young non-profit organization as the institute that advances evidence-based public health that assists in creating more knowledgeable and better-informed health care and well-being for women.

In 2020, IAWH used virtual meeting platforms to deliver 15 high-quality educational programs and activities, featuring highly accomplished and sought-after professionals in research, health delivery, and wellness. We collaborated with the American University Public Health Scholars Program. We mentored four first-year students, offering them an opportunity to work with a non-profit organization and explore their interests in women's health and public health.

While we accept donations throughout the year, IAWH conducted an end-of-year fundraising effort that was respectfully well received.



2020 PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES



A WOMEN'S WELLNESS CHECK DURING COVID-19



By April 2020 women everywhere had their lives interrupted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. Social distancing also meant physical distancing, leaving people feeling isolated, overwhelmed, needing to make self-care a priority. For the inaugural gathering of the Women's Wellness Lounge, IAWH registered 30 participants. Elizabeth Cotter, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Health Studies and Director of the Behavioral Health and Well-Being Lab at American University, Washington, D.C., led 30 registered participants through a wellness check-in addressing issues associated with working from home, homeschooling children, missing friends and family, the death of loved ones, depression and more.

WHAT ALL WOMEN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT STDs



Zerline Chambers-Kersey, MD. (Obstetrician-Gynecologist), practicing in Prince William County, Virginia, led a Women's Wellness Lounge talk on the topic, What ALL Women Need to Know About STDs and STIs. Participants were encouraged to submit questions in advance of the session. Dr. Chambers-Kersey's presentation provided a plain-language lesson on STD/STI basics and questions were as diverse as, why are STDs suddenly on the rise? Is HPV an STD? Is there a difference between chlamydia and gonorrhea? Is herpes worse than cold sores? Does HIV always become AIDS? Can a woman get a sexually transmitted disease (STD) from another woman?

ENDOMETRIOSIS & UTERINE FIBROIDS: A CANDID TALK



An estimated 26 million women in the U.S. are living with uterine fibroids, and 6.5 million are living with endometriosis. Fibroids occur almost exclusively among reproductive-age women, increasing with age until menopause. Although benign, symptomatic fibroids are associated with considerable morbidity, including abnormal bleeding that can lead to anemia, transfusions, or emergency surgery; pain or pressure on pelvic and abdominal organs; bladder pressure; and adverse reproductive outcomes. Endometriosis occurs when tissue similar to the inner lining of the uterus, also known as the endometrium, is found outside its normal location, where the tissue should not be. The now late Gabrielle Bercy, MD, MPH, MBA, led one of 2020's best attended and most engaging presentations on symptoms, diagnosis, and therapies for managing uterine fibroids and endometriosis.

RESILIENCE: REBOUNDING FROM ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



Changing the course of our lives can happen at any age. The journey to that change can begin with understanding how adverse events from childhood can be used to build resilience. Michelle Hoersch, M.S., an expert in the field of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma-Informed Care, has worked in public health and on women's health issues ranging from intimate partner violence to trauma-informed care for over twenty-five years. She presented evidence-based research linking childhood abuse, neglect, and household challenges to adult health and well-being.

3 SUNDAYS IN JULY - WRITING FOR EMOTIONAL WELLNESS



IAWH

Writing is therapy. Journaling is freeing. For three Sunday afternoons in July, IAWH invited women to a virtual quiet space for a guided workshop to write, to journal, to explore health and wellness, listen to the noise inside our heads, organize thoughts, acknowledge fear, pain, anxiety, uncertainty, claim decency, kindness, and compassion – and reach towards emotional and physical wellbeing centeredness, and calm.

The year 2020 wasn't turning out the way anyone had planned or expected. No one could have forecast a Coronavirus pandemic, the death of over so many Americans because of the virus, the personal impact of social distancing, mass unemployment, teleworking, home schooling, televised police brutality ending in death, protests, and riots, could all happen at the same time.

For 60 – 90 minutes participants were guided using verbal and visual prompts and asked to share their writing and their thoughts voluntarily.

FROM ZAMBIA TO THE US: ELIMINATING CERVICAL CANCER



The Centers for Disease Control recommends one-on-one education to help increase knowledge and engage patients about screening for cervical cancer in the United States. The Institute for the Advancement of Women's Health (IAWH) used the Women's Wellness Lounge to reach "one woman at a time" when IAWH invited Groesbeck P. Parham, M.D., a professor of gynecologic oncology in the UNC-Chapel Hill OB-GYN's Division of Global Women's Health in Zambia, to provide a unique perspective on the diagnosis, treatment, and care of women's cancers, comparing incidence and cases he treats across Southern Africa with women's health in the United States. Dr. Parham currently lives and has worked in Zambia for more than a decade and is the only gynecologic oncologist in Zambia, and one of only a handful on the continent of Africa.

LONELINESS, SOCIAL ISOLATION, AND WOMEN'S HEALTH



- More than one-fifth of adults in the U.S. (22 percent) and the U.K. (23 percent) say they often or always feel lonely, feel that they lack companionship, feel left out, or feel isolated from others.*
- Loneliness and social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and is more dangerous than obesity.**
- Two in five Americans report that they sometimes or always feel their social relationships are not meaningful, and one in five say they feel lonely or socially isolated.**
- Living alone, being unmarried (single, divorced, widowed), no participation in social groups, fewer friends, and strained relationships are not only all risk factors for premature mortality but also increase the risk for loneliness.**

The Institute for the Advancement of Women's Health hosted a discussion with Alice Chen, M.D. Dr. Chen and her husband, Dr. Vivek Murthy, 19th and 21st U.S. Surgeon General, have studied, presented, and published articles and a book on this topic.

WRITING FOR EMOTIONAL WELLNESS



I A W H

IAWH hosted three Sunday afternoon workshops, “Writing for Emotional Wellness” on several themed topics: Grief and Loss, Family Secrets, Gratitude, and Forgiveness. Each therapeutic session was designed around free written expression guided by verbal and visual prompts, followed by the opportunity for sharing of writing and discussion.

BREAST HEALTH: BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY



Breast cancer doesn't discriminate. Our breasts require attention. IAWH invited Geoffrey Ray, MD, Radiation Oncologist, and Debra Rundles, RN, Oncology Navigator to the Women's Wellness Lounge to speak candidly, answer questions about every phase of breast development, breast cancer prevention, pain, problems, diagnosis, treatment, recovery, and survivorship. Together they represent 45 years of breast health and oncological experience.

CAREGIVING: THE SUPPORT THAT YOU NEED FOR THE CARE THAT YOU GIVE



“There are only four kinds of people in the world. Those who have been caregivers. Those who are currently caregivers. Those who will be caregivers, and those who will need a caregiver.” — Rosalyn Carter

The caregiving role is often unexpected. Many are unprepared to serve on a short- or long-term basis as advocates. The sole caregiver manages medicines, appointments, and may need to move a loved one into their home.

IAWH invited Karen Lindsey Marshall, J.D., a national leader from the National Alliance for Caregiving to the Women's Wellness Lounge to speak about navigating the role of caregiver, setting self-care and wellness priorities, talk about the joys and challenges of caregiving, and spend time answering questions to help support caregivers.

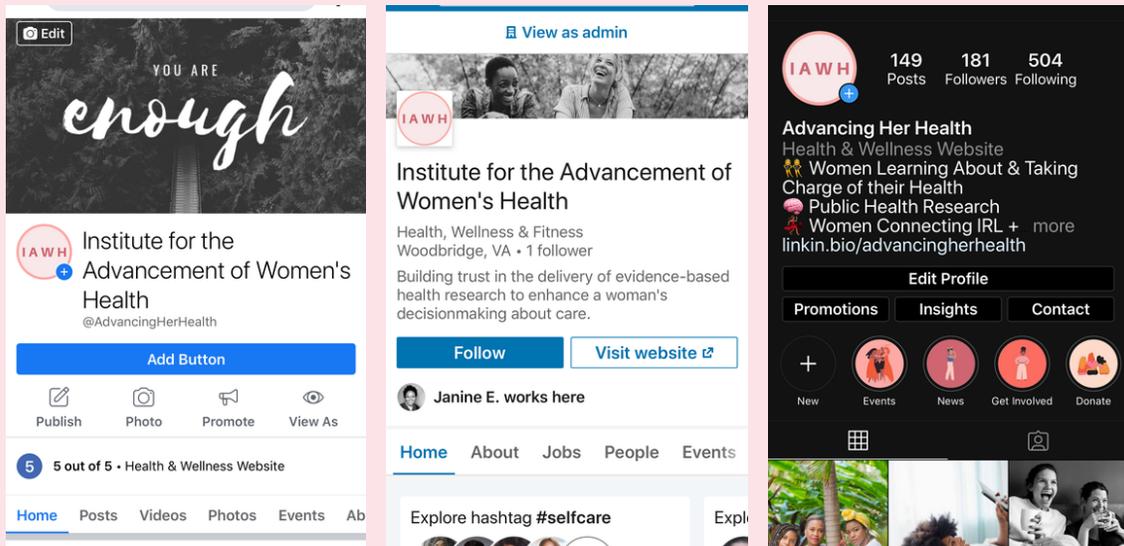
“BECOMING” TOGETHER, IN BLUE: A SEASONAL HAPPY HOUR WITH A WOMEN’S HEALTH FOCUS



IAWH

Michelle Obama’s memoir, *“Becoming,”* has received worldwide praise - it was the best-selling hardcover book of 2018 and is still a much-talked-about masterwork. To keep socially connected throughout this time of year, IAWH hosted an online social “Becoming” Together in Blue; to discuss the highlights of Obama’s book in parallel to her unique ways of addressing physical and psychological wellness and the prioritization of self-care through this 2020 holiday celebratory wrap-up.

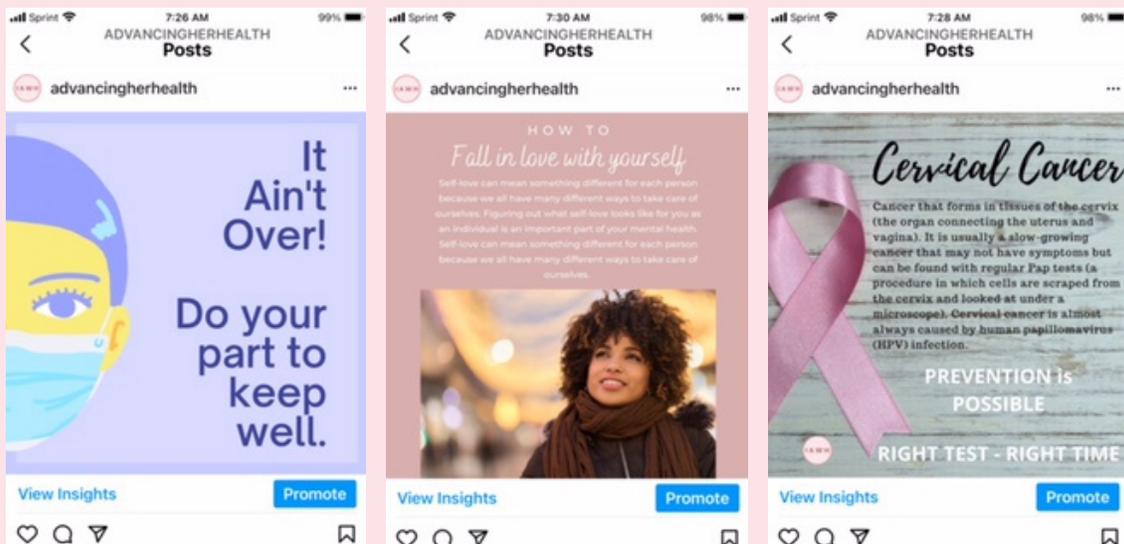
IAWH SOCIAL MEDIA



Social Media -

IAWH began using several social media platforms to connect and communicate with several audiences. Our social media platforms promote national and international women's health observances, such as Heart Health Month in February, Lupus Awareness Month in May, and Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. Social media plays a significant role in the promotion of the organization and of IAWH programs.

At the time of this report IAWH has attracted 408 followers on Facebook, 485 followers on Instagram, 63 followers on Twitter, and 103 followers on LinkedIn.





HER STORIES

In an effort to promote peer-to-peer learning and sharing, IAWH Her Stories was created to invite women to share their health and wellness stories. It is based on conversations with women who shared their stories with us and confirmed its critical link to women connecting, building, and growing stronger in their health journey.

In addition, health promotion research shows that storytelling that uses videos, letters, and newsletters is highly effective in educating and motivating women around certain health topics.

IAWH CONNECTIONS

IAWH Connections is a private space located within the IAWH Facebook page, where women can come together to discuss health and wellness topics, post virtual programs and presentations, where private conversations can take place without the full scrutiny of a public-facing chat space on Zoom or other social media platforms. Entrance is by invitation only.

This space will be utilized much more in the future to host special events and private classes.

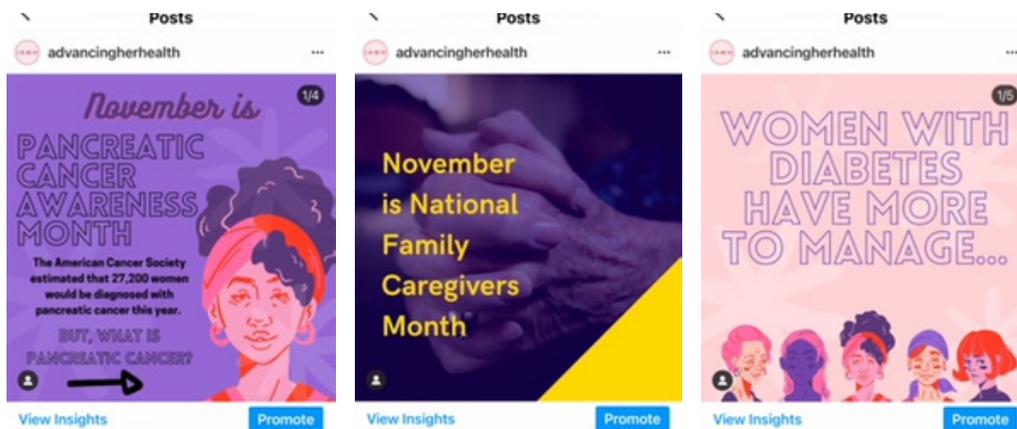




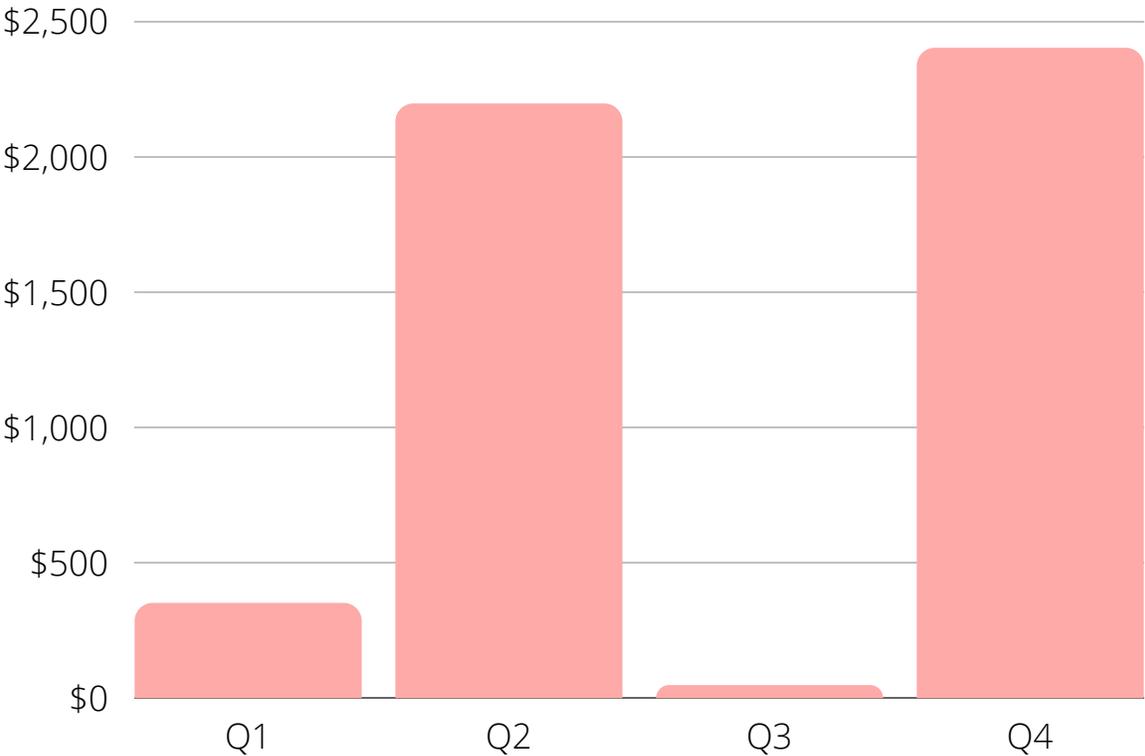
2020 IAWH INTERNS

IAWH partnered with the American University Public Health Scholars program, engaging and mentoring four students. The students, early in their academic careers were introduced to women's health as public health beyond reproductive health.

They were tasked with researching and developing monthly social media campaigns that conveyed evidence-based health information on women's health issues. They also reviewed and critiqued the Her Stories initiative, and developed a script of questions for future Facebook Live and IG Live interviews with women on women's health.



FINANCIALS



Monthly Expenses

IAWH incurs the following monthly and other expenses.

Social Media

- Sprout \$69/month

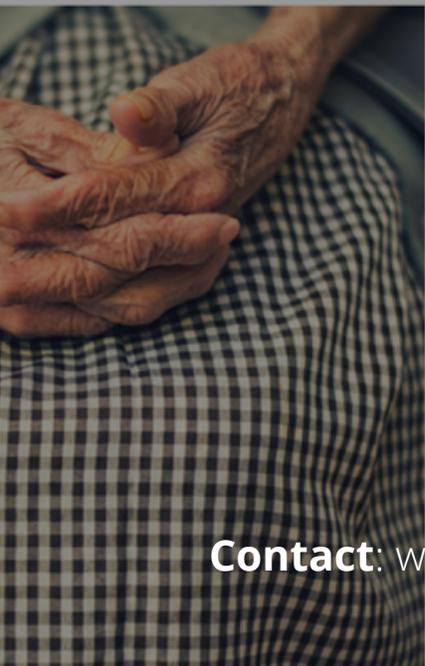
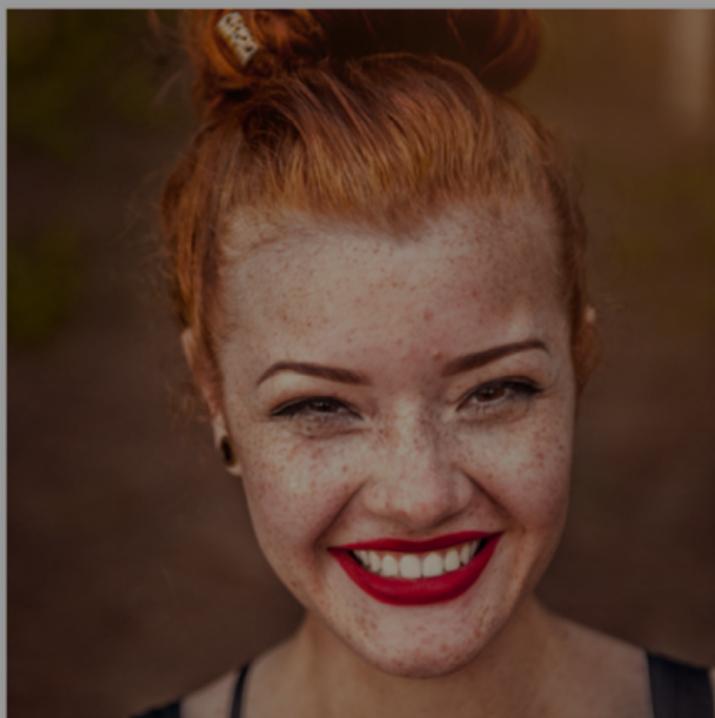
Website

- Domain \$324/year
- Upgrade
- Wix Professional \$24.85

Zoom Professional \$157.40/year

Banking Fees \$101.97

IAWH incurred monthly and other expenses to include social media, website domain management, and other fees for a total of \$700.



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